

## CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1 1. A method of presenting a unified view of a first message sent to a first mailbox on  
2 a second client using a low cost communication channel and a high cost communication  
3 channel, the first mailbox coupled by a first communication channel to a first client, the  
4 first client having a second communication channel with a second mailbox and a low cost  
5 communication channel with the second client, the second client capable of being coupled  
6 in communication with the second mailbox using the high cost communication channel,  
7 the method comprising:

8 receiving the first message at the first client;

9 generating a distinguishing identifier for the first message;

10 sending at least a portion of the first message and the distinguishing identifier to  
11 the second mailbox using the second communication channel;

12 responsive to an action on the first message on the first client, creating a second

13 message including the distinguishing identifier and a description of the action;

14 sending the second message to the second mailbox using the second  
15 communication channel;

16 selectably updating the unified view of the first message on the second client using  
17 either the high cost communication channel or the low cost communication  
18 channel.

1 2. The method of claim 1, wherein the selectably updating the unified view further  
2 comprises:

3 using the low cost communication channel when the second client is coupled in  
4 communication with the first client;

5 updating the unified view of the first message on the second client using the at  
6 least a portion of the first message and the action;  
7 removing the at least a portion of the first message and the second message from  
8 the second mailbox after updating the unified view.

1 3. The method of claim 1, wherein the selectably updating the unified view further  
2 comprises:

3 using the high cost communication channel when the second client is coupled in  
4 communication with the second mailbox;  
5 receiving the at least a portion of the first message on the second client from the  
6 second mailbox;  
7 receiving the second message on the second client using the second message; and  
8 updating the unified view of the first message on the second client using the  
9 second message.

1 4. The method of claim 1, wherein the high cost communication channel comprises a  
2 wireless communication channel.

1 5. The method of claim 1, wherein the low cost communication channel comprises a  
2 synchronization communication channel.

1 6. The method of claim 1, wherein the action comprises at least one of reading the  
2 first message, replying to the first message, forwarding the first message, classifying the  
3 first message, and deleting the first message.

7. The method of claim 1, wherein the first message includes an attachment, and wherein the at least a portion of the first message comprises a predetermined amount of the first message without the attachment.

1 8. An apparatus for presenting a unified view of a first message sent to a first mailbox  
2 on a second client using a low cost communication channel and a high cost  
3 communication channel, the first mailbox coupled by a first communication channel to a  
4 first client, the first client having a second communication channel with a second mailbox  
5 and a low cost communication channel with a second client, the second client capable of  
6 being coupled in communication with the second mailbox using the high cost  
7 communication channel, the method comprising:

8 means for receiving the message at the first client;

9 means for generating a distinguishing identifier for the first message;

10 means for sending at least a portion of the first message and the distinguishing

11 identifier to the second mailbox using the second communication channel;

12 means for creating a second message including the distinguishing identifier and a

13 description of the action responsive to an action on the first message on the

14 first client;

15 means for sending the second message to the second mailbox using the second

16 communication channel;

17 means for selectably updating the unified view of the first message on the second

18 client using either the high cost communication channel or the low cost

19 communication channel.

1 9. The apparatus of claim 8, wherein the means for generating a distinguishing  
2 identifier for the first message comprises:  
3 means for generating a string with an address corresponding to the first mailbox;  
4 means for generating an increasing number; and  
5 means for adding a header to the first message, the header including the increasing  
6 number and the string.

10. The apparatus of claim 8, wherein the means for generating a distinguishing identifier for the first message comprises means for computing a secure hash of a portion of the first message.

1 11. A computer data signal embodied in a carrier wave comprising:  
2 a computer program for a unifier, the computer program including  
3 a first set of instructions for accessing a first message;  
4 a second set of instructions for attaching a distinguishing identifier to the first  
5 message;  
6 a third set of instructions for sending at least a portion of the first message and  
7 the distinguishing identifier to a second mailbox;  
8 a fourth set of instructions for creating a second message including the  
9 distinguishing identifier and a description of the action responsive to an  
10 action on the first message;  
11 a fifth set of instructions for sending the second message to the second  
12 mailbox;  
13 a sixth set of instructions for selectably updating the unified view of the  
14 message on a second client using either a high cost communication channel  
15 or a low cost communication channel.

1 12. The computer data signal of claim 11, wherein the computer program further  
2 includes a seventh set of instructions for accepting signals to control use of the high cost  
3 communication channel and the low cost communication channel.

1 13. The computer data signal of claim 12, wherein the seventh set of instructions  
2 further comprises an eighth set of instructions for defining a filter, the filter for selecting  
3 whether the first message should be updated using the high cost communication channel.

1 14. The computer data signal of claim 12, wherein the seventh set of instructions  
2 further comprises an eighth set of instructions for translating an attachment included in the  
3 first message from a first format into a second format.

1 15. The computer data signal of claim 11, wherein the third set of instructions further  
2 comprises a seventh set of instructions for automatically summarizing messages larger  
3 than a predetermined size.

1 16. A computer program product comprising:  
2 a computer usable medium having a computer readable program code embodied  
3 therein including an interface to a mail agent on a client and a unifier, the  
4 interface permitting the unifier to access a message on the client and update the  
5 view of the message in the mail agent on the client.

1 17. The computer program product of claim 16, wherein the interface comprises a  
2 messaging application programming interface compliant interface.

1 18. The computer program product of claim 16, wherein the unifier can selectively  
2 update a unified view of a message on a second client using either a high cost  
3 communication channel or a low cost communication channel.